

THE INVENTION CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of guiding a customer to a product
2 available for sale in a retail store, the method comprising
3 the steps of:

4 entering at least one product code;
5 retrieving product location information for
6 at least one product corresponding to the entered at least
7 one product code; and
8 presenting the retrieved product location
9 information to the customer.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least
2 one product code is entered via the Internet.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least
2 one product code is entered via a device located at the
3 retail store.

1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the at least
2 one product code is entered via a kiosk located at the
3 retail store.

1 5. The method of claim 3, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is a handheld device carried by
3 the customer.

1 6. The method of claim 3, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is integrated with a shopping
3 container.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the presenting
2 step includes printing the location information on a piece
3 of paper.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the printing
2 occurs at the retail store.

1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein the printing
2 occurs at a location remote from the retail store.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the presenting
2 step includes displaying the retrieved location information
3 on a display screen of a device located at the retail store.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is a kiosk.

1 12. The method of claim 10, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is a handheld device carried by
3 the customer.

1 13. The method of claim 10, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is integrated with a shopping
3 cart.

1 14. The method of claim 10, wherein the device
2 located at the retail store is integrated with a shopping
3 basket.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein the presenting
2 step includes audibly reproducing the retrieved location
3 information.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieved
2 location information presented to the customer includes a
3 walking route map to a location of the at least one product.

1 17. The method of claim 1, further comprising the
2 step of selecting a store location for which the product
3 location information is to be retrieved.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieved
2 and presented product location indicates a store aisle in
3 which the at least one product is located.

1 19. A system for guiding a customer to a product
2 available for sale in a retail store, comprising:
3 a transportable computing device;
4 a computer in communication with the
5 transportable computing device and programmed to download to
6 the transportable computing device product location
7 information that is indicative of a location of the product
8 in the retail store.

1 20. The system of claim 19, wherein the
2 transportable computing device is a handheld device.

1 21. The system of claim 19, wherein the
2 transportable computing device is integrated with a shopping

3 container.

1 22. The system of claim 19, wherein the
2 transportable computing device presents the downloaded
3 product location to the customer in the form of visual
4 information.

1 23. The system of claim 19, wherein the
2 transportable computing device presents the downloaded
3 product location to the customer in the form of audible
4 information.

1 24. The system of claim 19, wherein the product
2 location information indicates an aisle in which the product
3 is located.

1 25. The system of claim 19, further comprising
2 means for determining a location of the transportable
3 computing device in the retail store.

1 26. A system for guiding a customer to a product
2 available for sale in a retail store, comprising:
3 entry means for entering at least one product
4 code;

5 retrieval means, responsive to the entry
6 means, for retrieving product location information for at
7 least one product corresponding to the entered at least one
8 product code; and

9 presentation means, responsive to the
10 retrieval means, for presenting the retrieved product

11 location information to the customer.

1 27. The system of claim 26, wherein the entry
2 means includes a personal computer connected to the
3 Internet.

1 28. The system of claim 27, wherein the
2 presentation means includes a printer connected to the
3 personal computer.

1 29. The system of claim 26, wherein the retrieval
2 means includes a server computer connected to the Internet.

1 30. The system of claim 26, wherein the entry
2 means includes a kiosk located at the retail store.

1 31. The system of claim 30, wherein the
2 presentation means includes a display screen of the kiosk.

1 32. The system of claim 30, wherein the
2 presentation means includes a printer associated with the
3 kiosk.

1 33. The system of claim 26, wherein the
2 presentation means includes a computing device transported
3 within the retail store by the customer.

1 34. The system of claim 33, further comprising
2 means for detecting a location of the computing device in a

3 retail store.

1 35. The system of claim 26, wherein the entry
2 means includes a portable computing device.

1 36. The system of claim 35, wherein the
2 presentation means includes a printer located at the retail
3 store.

1 37. The system of claim 36, wherein the retrieval
2 means includes a computer located at the retail store.

1 38. A system for guiding a customer to a product
2 available for sale in a retail store, comprising:
3 a portable computing device in which a
4 shopping list is stored;
5 a computer in communication with the portable
6 computing device; and
7 a printer controlled by the computer to print
8 product location information corresponding to items on the
9 shopping list.

1 39. The system of claim 38, wherein the portable
2 computing device is a PDA.

1 40. The system of claim 38, wherein the computer
2 is in wireless communication with the portable computing
3 device.

1 41. The system of claim 38, wherein the product

3 printed together with the retrieved product location
4 information.

1 48. The method of claim 47, wherein an indication
2 of an alternative to the unavailable item is printed
3 together with the retrieved product location information.

1 49. The method of claim 43, wherein comparison
2 shopping information for at least one item of the shopping
3 list is printed together with the retrieved product location
4 information.

1 50. A computer program product comprising:
2 a medium readable by a computer, the computer
3 readable medium having computer program code adapted to:
4 receive entry of at least one product
5 code;
6 retrieve product location information
7 for at least one product corresponding to the received at
8 least one product code; and
1 present the retrieved product location
2 code to a customer.

3 51. A method of guiding a customer to a product
4 available for sale in a retail store, the method comprising
5 the steps of:
6 selecting a product from an on-line catalog;
7 retrieving product location information for
8 the selected product; and
9 presenting the retrieved product location

10 information to the customer.

11 52. The method of claim 51, further comprising
12 selecting a store location.